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ABSTRACT

This study elevated the effectiveness of the Dean's Scholars Programs (DSP) at Wilbur Wright Campus, Chicago City College (Illinois). The program--initiated in September 1966--provided selected freshman and sophomore students with opportunities to prepare for professional study through accelerated courses. The program planners hoped that the existence of such a program would attract more able students and improve the intellectual climate of the school. DSP course instructors, plus current and former DSP students, completed similar questionnaires concerning the influence of the program on students' attendance at Wright. Summary conclusions included the revelation that this program had little influence on attracting more academically able students and that DSP subject matter should be periodically scrutinized to insure that the students are properly prepared for subsequent upper division courses at receiving institutions. (JO)

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THE DEAN'S SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT WRIGHT COLLEGE

A Preliminary Appraisal

(Corrected copy)

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

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Director of Research and Evaluation

August 11, 1969

Introduction

This study was initiated at the suggestion of the Dean of Instruction of Wilbur Wright College and is an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The study was carried out by the Director of Research and Evaluation and was accomplished with the cooperation of the Faculty Advisory Committee of the Dean's Scholars Program, instructors in the program, current and former students in the program. Thanks go to Mrs. Margaret Shanafield, Acting Chairman of the Faculty Advisory Committee who has been filling in for June Cordier while on leave; Mrs. Shanafield has been most cooperative in providing information about the program.

Any serious evaluation of a program will have to be done in terms of the stated purposes of the program. The description of the program that follows was supplied by Mrs. Shanafield. In that description the purposes are stated as more or less formal objectives; however, it might be well for the reader to bear in mind that the motivation for the program was to "attract the more able student to Wright and to improve the intellectual atmosphere once the more able student was here."

Historical Background

In January, 1964, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Superior Student presented a report of its findings to the faculty and administration. As a result of the Ad Hoc Committee report, in the Spring of 1966 planning for the Dean's Scholar Program was initiated with the appointment of a coordinator and a Faculty Honors Council. The main concern of this committee was the establishment of a pilot program of classes scheduled to begin operation in the Fall Semester, 1966. The program has continued and is presently completing the third full year.

Purpose

The Dean's Scholars Program is concerned with offering special educational opportunities to superior students through accelerated classes that require extra study and more extensive reading. The program emphasizes academic excellence and

encourages students to prepare for professional study through sustained academic participation in the undergraduate work. The program stresses seriousness of purpose, persistence, and self-discipline in academic endeavor.

Selection of Students

In September, 1966 the first group of fifty-four students was enrolled in the Dean's Scholars Program. Students were selected in accordance with criteria established by the Faculty Honors Committee. Among the criteria an ACT composite score of 24 or above was required. In addition, the following type of evidences of scholastic achievement were examined for consistency with the test scores:

a) High Rank in graduating class.
b) Transcript of high school grades indicating college prep courses.
c) Personal interview with Dean's Scholars Program Committee member indicating academic motivation.

The procedure for selecting students has not changed appreciably since the inception of the program.

Parents and prospective freshmen students are invited to a reception and informational program each Spring during the month of June. Both parents and students are provided information about the opportunities presented in the program as well as about the requirements for success. Students are admitted as freshmen (using above criteria) with the understanding that they may have one year in the program to show their potentiality for success. Advanced students have been included in the program through evidence of past semester's performance.

Operation of Program (Classes)

The first program offered was to a group of fifty-four freshman students in September, 1966 and included a Special Honors course in English 101, Social Science 101, Biology 111 and Physical Science 111. Instructors for these classes were selected from among those who could combine the counseling function with the teaching function. Placement at the appropriate level was made in regular courses in Chemistry, Mathematics and Languages. The following semester (February, 1967) the

program consisted of the second semester sequence of the same courses. The third semester (September, 1967) the freshman courses originally offered were offered again with the addition of Speech 101 and Humanities 201 for the sophomores.

During the Fall Semester, 1967, a slight change was made in the criteria for admission to English Honors, (no longer a Dean's Scholars English class). Changes by the English Department included.

(1) an ACT of 24 or above in English.
(2) a Writing Sample test conducted by the English Department.
(3) recommendation by the English Department Honors Committee on the basis of the above.

In the Spring Semester of 1968 the Dean's Scholars Program included Psychology 201 and Humanities 210, American Culture, 1800-1860. Humanities 210 was an interdisciplinary course especially adapted for students anticipating attendance at a two-week seminar in Massachusetts, June 1968.

Plan of the Study

The general plan of this appraisal was to ask those persons most intimately involved with the Dean's Scholars Program (DSP) to respond to questions about the program. Therefore, questionnaires were prepared and were circulated among the Faculty Advisory Committee for criticism before being used. Three different questionnaires were then prepared for (a) the current Dean's Scholars Program students, (b) former Dean's Scholars Program students, and (c) faculty teaching Dean's Scholars Program courses. Copies of the questionnaires are found in the appendix to this report. A summary of the data obtained from these questionnaires and an analysis of this data are found in subsequent sections of this report.

Mrs. Shanafield supplied a list of Dean's Scholars admitted September, '67 on which there was a total of 86 names. Of these 86, 51 were still enrolled and 35 had left Wright as of April 1969. A similar list of 61 Dean's Scholars admitted September, '68 was supplied to us, of which all but 2 were still enrolled as of the date of this study. No inferences are made here about this data except that the problem of withdrawal of Dean's Scholars students may be an area for further investigation.

Response of Faculty Members Teaching in the Dean's Scholars Program

The Faculty members responded to a questionnaire that was constructed covering many of the same items that was constructed for former Dean's Scholars Program students and for current Dean's Scholars Program students. The questionnaire was sent to all teachers on campus who were former or current teachers in the program. There were twelve responses and these represented six departments for a total of twenty-four Dean's Scholars Program courses. One person had taught four Dean's Scholars Program courses and four people had taught one. The teachers were asked to compare Dean's Scholars Program courses with comparable courses in their department and to indicate the quality of the course. They responded that there was generally more independent work; there was more work in general; that the courses were harder; more thought provoking; and, there was less routine activity associated with the course. They were asked to respond to an open-ended question about tests, teachers, and grades. They generally didn't respond to these, however, the comments that were made indicated that the tests were harder; that they were hopefully more of the essay type; that there was less simple recall being tested. The teachers seemed to indicate that the better teachers were selected to participate in the program. The participating teachers may be realistic in their view of themselves as the better teachers since the former Dean's Scholars Program students made this same judgment.

With regard to grades, teachers seemed to indicate that grades were higher, perhaps as one indicated, this is automatically so. With regard to the selection process of Dean's Scholars Program students, most of the teachers felt that they were reasonably well selected, however, a few responded that they were "not really" well selected. This may simply reflect the desire on the part of teachers to have higher caliber or more able students in their courses, even though these students, at least on paper, are the best that we have.

In responding to the item about the amount or extent of counseling or academic advising that the teacher does privately with their Dean's Scholars Program students, the results were enlightening as they tended to reflect responses of students and

verify students judgments of teachers. Members of the Physical Science Department indicated that they talked with fewer than three students per semester per class. Biological Sciences indicated that they talked with from five to seven students per semester per class, and members of the Social Science Department talked with ten or more students per semester per class. These responses tend to confirm the ratings former Dean's Scholars Program students made of the Physical Science teachers on the friendliness scale. Here we see Physical Science rated as being somewhat aloof or restricted in their classroom behavior and the Social Science teachers are rated as somewhat more friendly and responsive. The Biological Science is rated somewhere in between these two.

In terms of the teachers judgment as to the degree or kind of professional counseling services provided this group of students, they disagreed quite severely with the judgments of former Dean's Scholars Program students who thought that the counseling services were quite adequate or, in fact, very adequate. The majority of the teachers felt that the services were inadequate which shows how little the teachers know about the program. These responses will be followed up to determine in what way these services are perceived to be inadequate.

The teachers were asked to briefly describe what they saw as the major goals and purposes of the Dean's Scholars Program. The majority responded the purpose was to present a more challenging and interesting course better suited to the level of ability of the student. There were some slight deviations of this approach. One indicated that the purpose was to allow for more individual work; another indicated that it provide for emotional adjustment, and another for recognition and to motivate students to do their best. However, the students and teachers, in general, agreed on purposes. The teachers were asked how well they felt these goals were being fully realized, and their responses in the majority of the cases were "somewhat", a few said, "Well." No one said, "Not at all."

Teachers were asked for suggestions for improvement of the program and there were a variety of responses. Some suggested a better selection and more socialization between Dean's Scholars students and teachers. One suggested that there should

be a greater integration of Dean's Scholars courses, and along that same line, another said interdisciplinary courses. A suggestion in Physical Science was that this course should be a different course using a different book with appropriate exams. This suggestion agrees with some of the comments students made. Another individual suggested there should be meetings between Dean's Scholars instructors to discuss goals, grading systems, etc. A number of teachers indicated the age old problem of "time to prepare, write, and teach." A new course requires time and effort and this is an item in short supply apparently, and, one individual suggested that when preparing a new course it may be that time could be awarded that person to devote to that task. Another teacher indicated that students who do not belong in the Dean's Honor Program should be weeded out early; that the deserving students ought to be treated more individually; and that the teacher should teach the course as he really envisaged it should be taught. One suggestion was that there should be more participation by the students in the courses - this may be a function of a particular course being taught. Another suggestion was that the teachers in the Dean's Scholars Program and the counselors might work more closely together in enriching and integrating the program. One comment was that special projects should be instituted for students in these courses, and finally there was a suggestion that more P.R. work be done; that publicity of statistics correlating enrollment in the Dean's Scholars Program courses and admittance to four year colleges be examined and that higher standards be imposed for admission to the program.

Teachers generally agreed that the Dean's Scholars Program is an agglomeration of discreet courses having little relation to each other. Their comments with regard to ways to improve the program seemed to indicate this same feeling. Teachers were asked to briefly describe the Dean's Scholars Program students by comparison with students from regular college program with respect to their level of aspiration and they felt it was somewhat higher. Speaking in terms of their capacity for hard work, the teachers were somewhat critical of the students in that they said they had a greater capacity for hard work than they exhibited. Teachers felt that they needed

to be motivated (externally) as much as regular students, or, that they did not work as hard as they could or should be expected to. In terms of financial need they didn't seem to see much difference here. In terms of socialability, teachers thought that Dean's Scholars Program students were quite a sociable bunch, but really not much different than the group they see in the regular program. In terms of enthusiasm for learning, they don't see a great deal of difference although there seems to be generally felt some increased enthusiasm in Dean's Scholars Program courses. There was some difference of opinion about the degree of participation in extracurricular activites and this may be unrelated to their academic ability. Some indicated there was a greater commitment here, others seemed to see no difference. The same kind of comment would go for the degree or extent of the development of a social conscience, and in terms of importance of education, these teachers felt that these students generally saw how important education was to them.

In item 11 of the questionnaire, the teachers were asked to rate the quality of instruction in Dean's Scholars Program courses <u>in their department</u> on three different scales. They generally tended to rate themselves high on each of the scales; although there was in some cases some critical comment about the unplanned or slipshod behavior in one or two instances. This may simply be a matter of personality or it may be a lack of understanding of what the motives or techniques that are being used in the classroom actually are. The last question of the questionnaire asked for suggestions for possible incorporation into the program. These suggestions called for more integration between departments and within departments, some student run research, more Dean's Scholars Program student interaction outside of class; some reduced loads for Dean's Scholars Program teachers; more independent work was felt to be generally desirable. Suggestions also were made for the more innovating type of teaching or use of multi-media materials and more independent work to permit students to progress at their own rate or according to their individual interests.

Summary Analysis of Questionnaire Sent to Former Dean's Scholars Program Students

In April, 1969, questionnaires were sent to 84 former Wright students who were members of the Dean's Scholars Program. Twenty-five responses to the questionnaire or about 30% of those sent were returned. The median age of the respondents was 20. The responses were evenly divided among the sexes, however, the 84 individuals to whom the questionnaire were sent were about 2/3 male. Sixty percent of respondents had spent four semesters at Wright and 40% had received the AA degree from Wright. Forty percent of the respondents had accumulated an average of 53 semester hours, and 20% did not respond to this item of information about themselves. The grade point averages of the respondents ranges from 2.2 to 4.0 with 3.5 as the median GPA.

Two of the students that responded are not now in college. The remainder are attending 13 different colleges, all but two of which are in Illinois and the majority of which are in the Chicago area. The University of Illinois, Chicago Circle is the most frequently attended college to which Dean's Scholars Program students transfer and the U of I, Urbana is listed second most frequently. The respondents fields of interest indicated that a few were in Business, a few were in Science, but that the Social Sciences are in the preponderence. Most of the respondents indicated that they had the same major field of concentration at Wright as they do now in the college to which they transferred.

The respondents indicated that they were quite pleased with the program and that they were happy to have been a part of it. No one had any negative comments about the program. In areas where questions were asked for constructive criticism, there were many comments which are reported elsewhere in this report. The questionnaire that was sent is included in the appendix. The students were asked in the questionnaire the extent of their influence to enter the Dean's Scholars Program and the responses indicated that there was little or no parental influence; the students were acting, they think at least, independently of their parents in making this decision. The students further indicated that the existing Dean's Scholars Program had little influence on whether or not they would attend Wright.

Students were asked to make some descriptive comments about aspects of the program, such as amount of independent work, degree of difficulties, routine activity, etc. Their comments were generally that there was more independent work associated with the Dean's Scholars Program, that the courses generally were more difficult than non-Dean's Scholars Program courses, that Dean's Scholars Program courses were more thought-provoking, and there was less routine activity than in the regular courses. When asked about the tests, responses ranged from "harder" to "easy", but most thought that they were good tests and were challenging. In regard to the teachers, comments ranged from "best" to "worst", but most thought that the teachers in the Dean's Scholars Program courses were "good" or "excellent". When asked about the grades, comments ranged from "easy" to "hard". Many indicated that the grades were "easy", but an equally large number said the grades were "fair". These comments together with those on the next item raise the question of qualitative differences between Dean's Scholars Program courses and others at Wright.

Students were asked to compare the quality of the course content at the institution to which they had transferred to that which they found in the Dean's Scholars Program courses at Wright. They were asked to respond on a 5 point scale to each of four different items. The items had to do with the degree of abstractness or difficulty, the amount of problem solving behavior expected of the student, the amount of time required in study, and the amount of individual initiative required to be a high achiever in their courses. The responses were as follows: In terms of the degree of abstractness or difficulty, the majority of the students said that in the institution to which they transferred, the courses were more abstract. The only surprising things was that some students indicated that they were neither more nor less abstract. In the item regarding problem solving behavior, again a majority of the respondents indicated that there was either "somewhat more" or "much more" expected of them. Again, surprisingly, some students said that it was neither more nor less. The same kind of response was indicated in terms in the amount of time required in study and also in terms of the amount of individual initiative required to achieve.

Very few students indicated that at the institution to which they transferred that "less" or "much less" was required of them. This is not surprising in terms of the names of the institutions to which the students transferred, nor considering the fact they are transferring for the most part at the junior level. This item of the questionnaire indicates, if anything, that there is a feeling on the part of the students that there is some divergence between the level of difficulty or degree of abstractness of the activities and behaviors required of students in the Dean's Scholars Program courses, and in those courses that they move on to at the university. There would be some indication here of trying to increase the level of difficulty and abstractness in Dean's Scholars Program courses <u>if any change was indicated</u>.

Item 6 in the questionnaire asked the students to indicate how they felt about the selection of students for the Dean's Scholars Program. The respondents indicated that it was generally fair and only one indicated that it was not really fair.

Item 7 asked the respondents how they felt about the counseling that Dean's Scholars received and the response here was "excellent attention was given to the individual situations."

The students were asked as to what they saw as the major goal in the Dean's Scholars Program. The most common response was "To offer challenging courses for bright students." Another type of response was "To prepare students for four year institutions." Also, "To develop an awareness of societial problems," and "To keep competition high and as a result, increase the achievement of the student. Another variation of this was, "To help the students develop confidence in their academic ability." Then when the students were asked as to whether they felt that these goals were being fully realized, they responded generally yes, that they were. There was, however, a very sizeable minority that said no.

Item 10 on the questionnaire asked about the degree of integration of the educational effort in the Dean's Scholars Program and the responses were somewhat weighted toward "an integrated program," that is to say, the respondents felt as a group that there was some relationship between the separate courses they were taking in the

Dean's Scholars Program.

Item 11 of the questionnaire asked students to briefly describe themselves on several dimensions; level of aspiration; capacity for hard work, etc. This item does not appear to give any useful information and in future questionnaires should either be revised completely or eliminated. The responses, however, are summarized here for the reader to judge for himself. The "level of aspiration" responses was usually given as "average" or "high" although some indicated this more specifically as B.S. degree, or Ph. D. degree. In terms of "capacity for hard work," they said this was high, although some qualified this "in areas of interest." They said that their financial need was average to great. One said he was on the brink of bankruptcy. In terms of sociability they said that they were friendly; some indicated they were somewhat withdrawn, but friendly. They were asked about their extra-curricular activities which ranged widely, although a large number indicated out-door type activities. The extent or degree of development of their social conscience indicated that they were "concerned" and they all felt that education was of great importance to them.

Item 12 of the questionnaire asked the students to rate the quality of instruction that they thought characterized teaching in the Dean's Scholars Program courses in four different departments. There were three scales and they were to respond on each scale on a 5 point basis. The Social Science Department was rated as being somewhat friendly and understanding on Scale 1. They were rated as being somewhat responsible and indicating systematic behavior on Scale 2, and students characterized them as enthusiastic, stimulating, and showing imaginative behavior in Scale 3. The Biological Science Department was rated as being somewhat friendly and understanding; they were rated as being responsible and showing systematic behavior on Scale 2, and being somewhat enthusiastic and showing stimulating and imaginative behavior on Scale 3. The Physical Science Department was rated somewhat less friendly then the other departments; rated somewhat less stimulating than the other departments; and rated only slightly more systematic than the Social Science Department. The Humanities

Department was rated "somewhat" on the three scales. A more complete analysis of the response to this item is presented on pages 15 and 16 of this report.

The final question on the questionnaire for the former Wright students who were members of the Dean's Scholars Program dealt with the question of suggestion for improvement of the program. The major suggestion was that the Dean's Scholars Program should be expanded and that more departments should be included. Several thought that an elective Dean's Scholars course should be available each semester. Some criticized the courses in Physical Science and Humanities as being just the same as the regular courses and that even the same exams were used and the students felt that this didn't really represent any different kind of course. The students suggested tutorials, suggested credit by examination, and one suggestion was that Dean's Scholars students could be used to tutor the remedial or regular students who wishes assistance. These same general suggestions were made by the current Dean's Scholars Program students and so will not be repeated again in the next section.

Analysis of the Questionnaire Submitted to Current Dean's Scholars Program Students

Questionnaires were sent to current Dean's Scholars Program students through the mailboxes of their instructors with a request that if the student was not still in class to return the questionnaire to me. In those cases where the questionnaire was returned, we sought to reach the student through a different instructor. In some cases a student was not reachable as he had left school. One hundred ten questionnaires were sent out and 32 were returned considering that of the 110 sent out, 35 had already left. The response by 32 out of 75 represents a return of 42%.

The median age of the current Dean's Scholars Program student is 19 both for males and females. The range in age for males is 17 to 20; for females it is 18 to 20. The median number of semester hours completed for males is 32 as it is also for females. The range for males is 4 to 70 which is the same range as for females. Median grade point average for males is 2.9; the range is 1.7 to 3.6. For females the median grade average is 3.4 and the range is 2.8 to 4.0. Both males and females

had completed zero semester hours elsewhere. The males were almost unanimous in professing to hold the goal of an AA degree from Wright and also indicating that they sought a B.S. degree. Two out of three females were seeking an AA degree from Wright and 4 out of 5 held the goal of a B.S. degree. Many of the students, both male and female, were undecided as to what institution they would transfer, but of those who specified an institution, all but 3 were planning to attend in-state schools. Most of the choices referred to an institution in or around Chicago.

Of the women respondents, three were math majors, but the majority were in English. Of the male respondents, a large number were in the Biological Sciences and the majority were in Sciences, Engineering or Mathematics. None of the women respondents had left the Dean's Scholars Program; five of the male respondents left the Dean's Scholars Program by reason of poor grades. These men generally felt that they shouldn't have had to leave the program.

The overwhelming appraisal of the program by current Dean's Scholars is a highly positive one. In only a very few instances did students indicate that the program did not live up to their expectations. However, in reading their suggestions for improving the program, there were several suggestions that the level of the program might be raised or expanded.

As with the responses of the former Wright students to the extent of parental influence to enter the program, the current students indicated that they were only moderately so influenced.

It is significant to note that only two of the current Dean's Scholars Program students responding to the questionnaire would have gone elsewhere if the program had not been in existence at Wright. This is consistent with the response that the former Wright students made to this question.

In the open-ended question referring to tests, teachers, and grades, the responses were so varied as to defy any complete analysis.

There were some comments of a comparative nature that are worth noting; although in the minority, they are somewhat significant in that they reflect similar

comments of former Dean's Scholars Program students that also said tests in Dean's Scholars Program courses were not different than in other courses. The majority of the responses were of a qualitative nature and indicated good teachers and fair grades.

The students were asked to describe their feelings about the selection of students in the Dean's Scholars Program - the responses indicated that they felt that the selection was fairly done.

The students described the counseling that they received as providing excellent attention to their individual situation.

The students were asked as to what they saw as their major goals in the Dean's Scholars Program and their responses indicated they felt it was to provide the more able student with opportunities designed for his level of achievement. Students were asked how well these goals were being realized and their response was, "yes, they were."

They were further asked how the program might be improved and they said that there should be more opportunity of choice in Dean's Scholars courses.

Students were asked about how well integrated the Dean's Scholars Program was, and they gave a neutral response.

Students were asked to describe themselves with respect to a number of variables; their responses were:

a) level of aspiration - high.

b) capacity for hard work - high.

c) financial need - great.

d) sociability - average.

e) extracurricular activities - a wide variety of responses.

f) extent of the development of social conscience - well developed.

g) degree of importance of education - high.

Students were asked to rate quality of instruction that in their judgment characterized teaching in Dean's Scholars Program courses in four departments:

Social Science; Biological Science; Physical Science and Humanities. They were asked to make a rating on three different scales; Scale 1 represented a continuum that might be called an "aloof - friendly" scale. Scale 2 might be labeled the "unplanned - systematic" scale, and Scale 3 could be labeled the "dull - stimulating" scale.

Table 1 summarizes the responses of both current and former Dean's Scholars Program students on this question. It will be noted that their responses were consistent in that they gave generally high marks on the first only to the same three departments and somewhat lower marks to the fourth department.

On Scale 2 the rank order of marks by departments was the same for current and former Dean's Scholars Program students. This scale shows clearly that instructor behavior in Biology and Physical Science was considered more systematic and carefully planned than it was in Humanities and Social Science.

On Scale 3 the current and former students again agreed in their ratings of the departments. The students agreed that instructors exhibited more enthusiastic, stimulating and imaginative behavior in the areas of Humanities and Social Science than they did in Physical Science and Biology

There has been no effort made here to validate these scales, but they give the appearance of dealing with substantively different dimensions. It is entirely possible that it is not a comparison between departments that we want to focus upon here, but rather the magnitude of the numbers. The mean of all ratings exceeded 3, the middle point of the scale, which indicated possession of the desired traits. What we don't know is the relationship (if any) between possession of these traits and student achievement of course objective.

Faculty responded to this question for their own department only. Their responses cannot be compared with the student responses in any but a very gross way, since their frame of reference was very different.

Table 1

Mean Rating's* of Departments on Scale 1

	Soc. Sci.	Humanities	Bio. Sci.	Phy. Sci.
By Current DSP Students	4.4	4.3	4.2	3.9
By Former DSP Students	4.1	4.2	4.3	3.6

Table 2

Mean Rating's of Departments on Scale 2

	Soc. Sci.	Humanities	Bio. Sci.	Phy. Sci.
By Current DSP Students	4.0	4.0	4.6	4.3
By Former DSP Students	4.4.	3.8	4.8	4.5

Table 3

Mean Rating's of Departments on Scale 3

	Soc. Sci.	Humanities	Bio. Sci.	Phy. Sci.
By Current DSP Students	4.3	4.0	3.7	3.4
By Former DSP Students	4.6	4.0	4.0	3.3

*This is scale 1 in item 11 in the questionnaire. Student assigned a letter A through E to indicate their judgment about the degree to which a department possessed this quality. For purposes of quantification, A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5 so that higher marks indicated the possession of more of this trait. The same scheme is used in Tables 2 and 3.

Follow-up of Dean's Scholars Program Students

During the summer of 1969, a questionnaire was sent to registrars of colleges where Dean's Scholars Program students had transferred* asking for a report on their progress. A copy of the letter sent is in the appendix. The response again leaves something to be desired - one of the problems is that many colleges will not release any information without the permission of the student. However, we have a report on 21 students, 17 of whom are attending in-state colleges. Five had been attending the senior institution one semester; two had accumulated credit for four semesters; two had three semesters work, and the remainder had two semesters at the senior college level. The mean G.P.A. of the group of 21 was 3.39; whereas, at Wright their mean G.P.A. was 3.82 on a 5.00 base.

Six Dean's Scholars Program students are attending University of Illinois, Urbana. The table below compares their record at Wright and at the University on the 5.00 base.

Table 4

	Record at Wright		Record at University of Illinois	
Student	Hours	G.P.A.	Hours	G.P.A.
#1	65	3.52	31	3.43
#2	32	4.11	62	3.39
#3	27	4.11	67	2.55
#4	72	4.42	30	3.30
#5	64	4.88	13	4.15
#6	64	4.29	14	2.42

*No definitive knowledge of Dean's Scholars Program student transfers was available. Letters were sent to colleges where Dean's Scholars Program students had asked to have a transcript sent.

An examination of Table 2 indicates that our Dean's Scholars Program students have a very acceptable record at University of Illinois; however, in only one case in six did they equal or exceed their achievement level at Wright.

Summary

One motivation for the Dean's Scholars Program at Wright was to attract the more able student to our doors; another was to provide a stimulating program for those coming anyway. The first has apparently not occurred as only a very tiny minority of students who were surveyed responded that they would not have come to Wright College if it were not for the Dean's Scholars Program. There are public relations campaign to reach the more able student and attract him to our door, or we can change our point-of-view in the program to aim primarily at the more able students whom we do receive. It is this second alternative that we are apparently presently following. The hoped for rise in the intellectual climate mentioned in the introduction was predicated on the influx of more able students drawn by the Dean's Scholars Program. Perhaps we can still seek a rise in intellectual climate, at the same time as we seek more comprehensiveness, as a result of adjusting the level of the Dean's Scholars Program courses. The fact that a sample of our "best" students have a "grade point average" at Wright of 2.82 and a "grade point average" after two semesters at a senior institution of 2.39 (based on the Wright 4.00 scale) does not appear to indicate a superior ability-level program. Other studies have shown that junior college transfers to senior institutions drop approximately .5 in "grade point average" the first semester, but that they nearly recover the "before transfer grade point average"after one year. We should reconsider our "student expectations" in Dean's Scholars Program courses base on this data.

There are sex differences in the grade distributions of current Dean's Scholars Program students; the men have a lower "grade point average" distribution then do the women. There is the possibility of these being biased samples. I have heard the argument among the faculty that women memorize what they are told and generally conform, but that when it comes to problem-solving that there isn't much

difference in male-female performances. Perhaps grades at Wright are based primarily on the achievement of simple cognitive behavior rather than on the more complex. This may be (if true) because it is so much harder to evaluate the achievement of the more complex behavior. It may also be that since we do not offer the upper division courses we find it difficult to establish a standard of achievement that will articulate well with the senior institution to which our students transfer. Perhaps we might consider the possibility of arranging some sort of swap of personnel with local senior institutions to help over-come this difficulty.

If the course examinations are the operational definitions of the courses objectives and if in some instances the course examinations are no different than in the regular courses, than we are in those instances deluding ourselves and have an honors program in name only. An examination of course final exams in the next round of this study will help to ascertain this.

Perhaps the Dean's Scholars Program at Wright should be aimed at the advanced student - either one who is beginning his sophomore year or who is ready for sophomore level courses. It could include "honors" courses offered outside the core of Dean's Scholars Program courses presently offered. It might include credit by examination, it might incorporate the use of "pass-fail" grades on some limited basis.

As a result of suggestions such as these, and many others which faculty and students can and will make if asked, the program can operate to hold a greater number of Dean's Scholars Program students at Wright for two full years. This would be one way of raising the intellectual atmosphere of the college. There is another side to this coin - eliminate the program.

If we cannot see almost all of our students through to an AA degree or a diploma; if cost studies, which I think ought to be undertaken, indicate greatly inflated unit costs; if current studies on heterogeneous versus homogeneous grouping in the schools are applicable to the junior college; if we do not have sufficient numbers of able students to warrant a significantly (qualitatively) different pro-

gram, than this may be the course of action that may best operate to raise the intellectual atmosphere in the college transfer courses. I would not, however, recommend it on the basis of anything reported in this study. However, I recommend to the dean that a target date on deciding on the continuation of the program in its present form be set by which time evidence could be gathered and a more complete evaluation made. Two more years with the Dean's Scholars Program should be ample. I would call for a meeting early in the Fall of 1969 of the Advisory Committee, faculty members teaching in the program and other persons interested in the program to discuss salient points raised here and to plan the second phase of this study.

APPENDIX

Date_____

DEAN'S SCHOLARS PROGRAM
Questionnaire for Former Wright Students

Name_____ Age_____
last first initial

Sex: M____ F____. Number of semesters spent at Wright_____.
Did you receive an A.A. degree at Wright? If not, what was the approximate number of semesters hours completed at Wright?_____. What (approximately) was your grade point average at Wright?_____. Are you in college now? yes____, no____. If so, where? _____. What was your major field of interest at Wright? _____. What is your major now?_____

1. What is your personal appraisal of the Dean's Scholars Program (D.S.P.) at Wright?
___an excellent program; ___a good program: ___neither a good nor a bad program;
___it did not live up to my expectations; ___generally a bad program.

2. To what extent was your decision to enter the D.S.P. influenced by your parents encouragement? ___greatly; ___moderately; ___somewhat; ___little.

3. Would you have gone to another college if the D.S.P. had not been in existence at Wright? ___yes ___no.

4. Comparing D.S. courses with other courses that you have had at Wright, what words would you choose to describe the differences (circle): less, more independent work; less, more work; easier, harder courses; less, more thought provoking; more, less routine activity.

_____ tests; _____teachers; _____grades (fill in whatever you wish

5. How do you compare the quality of course content at the institution to which you transferred as to that which you found in D.S.P. courses at Wright (circle letter in each line below)

	much more	somewhat more	neither more no less	somewhat less	much less
a) degree of abstractness or difficulty	A	B	C	D	E
b) amount of problem solving behavior expected of student	A	B	C	D	E
c) amount of time required in study	A	B	C	D	E
d) amount of individual initiative required to achieve	A	B	C	D	E

6. Describe how you feel about the selection of students for the Dean's Scholar program.
____very fair; ____generally fair; ____fair; ____not really fair; ___very unfair

7. Describe how you feel about the counseling that Deans Scholar Students receive.
____excellent attention given to your individual situation.
____some attention given to your individual situation.
____about the same amount of attention as is received by all students.
____too little individual attention has been received by D.S. Students.
____almost no individual attention has been received by D.S. Students.

8. What do you see as the major goals of the Dean Scholar Program?_____

_____

). Do you feel that this (these) goal(s) mentioned above are being fully realized?
___yes ___no. If no, how might the faculty (and students) improve the program?

_____

_____

10. Do you feel that the D.S. program is an agglomeration of discrete courses having little relation to each other or is it an integrated educational effort that reinforces and ties together ideas, concepts, understandings from many disciplines into a unified educational experience? Perhaps it is somewhere between these polarized descriptions - give your answer by circling some point on the scale below.

1	2	3	4	5
discrete courses	somewhat discrete	neither discrete nor integrated	somewhat integrated	an integrated program

11. Briefly describe yourself with respect to:

a) your level of aspiration_____
b) your capacity for hard work_____
c) your financial need_____
d) your sociability (friendliness)_____
e) extracurricular activities that you really like_____
f) the extent or degree of development of your social conscience_____
g) how important education is to you_____

12. On the three scales below you are asked to rate the quality of instruction that you think characterizes teaching in D.S.P. courses in the department named.

Scale 1:

aloof, restricted egocentric behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	friendly understanding behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 2:

evading, unplanned slipshod behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	responsible systematic behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 3:

dull, routine behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	enthusiastic, stimulating imaginative behavior
A	B	C	D	E

(Place the letter that you think appropriately describes instruction in the space provided)

Social Science: Scale 1_____; Scale 2_____; Scale 3_____.

Biological Science: Scale 1_____; Scale 2_____; Scale 3_____.

Physical Science: Scale 1_____; Scale 2_____; Scale 3_____.

Humanities: Scale 1_____; Scale 2_____; Scale 3_____.

13. What suggestions would you urge be examined for possible incorporation into the program and why would they be desirable? (e.g., students might be allowed to take a course for credit but receive grade of "pass" or "fail" if they so desired, or credit by examination or perhaps more extensive use of tutorials)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DEAN'S SCHOLARS PROGRAM

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FACULTY MEMBERS IN THE PROGRAM

1. Department_____

2. Approximately how many D.S.P. courses have you taught?_____

3. Comparing D. S. courses with other comparable courses in your department, what words would you choose to describe the differences (circle):

   less more - independent work; less more - work; easier harder - courses;

   less more - thought provoking; more less routine activity;

   _____tests, _____teachers, _____grades (fill in whatever you wish)

4. Describe how you feel about the selection process for the students in the D.S.P.

   ___highly selected; ___generally well selected; ___moderately well selected;

   ___not really well selected; ___poorly selected.

5. Describe the amount or extent of counseling or academic advising that you do privately with your D.S.P. students.

   ___ I talk with fewer than 3 students per semester on the average per class.
   ___ I talk with from 3 - 5 students per semester on the average per class.
   ___ I talk with from 5 - 7 students per semester on the average per class.
   ___ I talk with from 7 - 9 students per semester on the average per class.
   ___ I talk with 10 or more students per semester on the average per class.

   (Note, we are attempting to assess the amount of counseling or advising that goes on by instructors in the D.S.P.)

6. Describe how you feel about the professional counseling services that Wright provides for this group of students.

   ____ more than adequate; ____ adequate; ____ inadequate

7. Briefly describe what you see as the major goals or purposes of the D.S.P.

   _____

   _____

8. (a) To what extent do you feel that those goals or purposes described in #7 above are being met?

   ____ very well; ____ well; ____ somewhat; ____barely; ____not at all

   (b) Do you have some suggestions for improvement?_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

9. Do you feel that the D. S. Program is an agglomeration of discrete courses having little relation to each other, or is it an integrated education effort that reinforces and ties together ideas, concepts, understandings from many disciplines into a unified educational program?

1	2	3	4	5
discrete courses	somewhat discrete	neither completely discrete nor completely integrated	somewhat integrated	an integrated program

10. Briefly describe D.S.P. students by comparison with students in the regular college program with respect to their:

a) level of aspiration_____

b) capacity for hard work_____

c) financial need (as you would judge it)_____

d) sociability (friendliness)_____

e) enthusiasm for learning_____

f) participation in extracurricular activities_____

g) extent or degree of the development of a social conscience_____

_____

h) importance of education_____

11. On the three scales below you are asked to rate the quality of instruction that characterizes D.S.P. courses in your department (including your own)

Scale 1:

aloof, restricted egocentric behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	friendly understanding behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 2:

evading, unplanned slipshod behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	responsible systematic behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 3:

dull, routine behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	enthusiastic, stimulating, imaginative behavior
A	B	C	D	E

12. What suggestions would you urge be examined for possible incorporation into the program and why would they be desirable? (e.g., credit by examination, pass or fail grades in courses other than major field, extensive use of tutorials, etc.).

_____

_____

_____

DEAN'S SCHOLARS PROGRAM
Questionnaire for Current Wright Students

Name_____ Age_____
last first initial

Sex: M___ F___ Number of semester hours complete at Wright as of June '69_____
What is your approximate grade point average at Wright?_____ How many sem. hrs. have you completed elsewhere?_____ at what institution(s)?_____ Are you seeking an A.A. degree from Wright? ___yes ___no. Date of your degree_____. Will you seek a bachelor's degree?___yes, ___no. At what institution?_____
What is your major field of interest?_____. Are you still in the Dean's Scholar program? ___yes, ___ no. If no, why not?_____

1. What is your personal appraisal of the Dean's Scholars Program (D.S.P.) at Wright?
___ an excellent program; ___ a good program; ___ neither a good nor a bad program;
___ it did not live up to my expectations; ___ generally a bad program.

2. To what extent was your decision to enter the D.S.P. influenced by your parents encouragement? ___ greatly; ___ moderately; ___ somewhat; ___ little.

3. Would you have gone to another college if the D.S.P. had not been in existence at Wright? ___ yes ___ no.

4. Comparing D.S. courses with other courses that you have had at Wright, what words would you choose to describe the differences (circle): less, more independent work; less, more work; easier, harder courses; less, more thought provoking; more, less routine activity.

_____ tests; _____teachers; _____ grades (fill in whatever you wish

5. Describe how you feel about the selection of students for the Deans Scholar program.
____very fair; ____generally fair; ____fair; ____not really fair; ____very unfair

6. Describe how you feel about the counseling that Deans Scholar Students receive.
____excellent attention given to your individual situation.
____some attention given to your individual situation.
____about the same amount of attention as is received by all students.
____too little individual attention has been received by D.S. Students.
____almost no individual attention has been received by D.S. Students.

7. What do you see as the major goals of the Dean Scholar Program?_____

_____

8. Do you feel that this (these) goal(s) mentioned above are being fully realized?
___ yes ___ no. If no, how might the faculty (and students) improve the program?

_____

_____

9. Do you feel that the D.S. program is an agglomeration of discrete courses having little relation to each other or is it an integrated educational effort that reinforces and ties together ideas, concepts, understandings from many disciplines into a unified educational experience? Perhaps it is somewhere between these polarized descriptions - give your answer by circling some point on the scale below.

1	2	3	4	5
discrete courses	somewhat discrete	neither discrete nor integrated	somewhat integrated	an integrated program

10. Briefly describe yourself with respect to:

a. your level of aspiration_____
b. your capacity for hard work_____
c. your financial need_____
d. your sociability (friendliness)_____
e. extracurricular activities that you really like_____
f. the extent or degree of development of your social conscience_____
g. how important education is to you_____

11. On the three scales below you are asked to rate the quality of instruction that you think characterizes teaching in D.S.P. courses in the department named.

Scale 1:

aloof, restricted egocentric behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	friendly understanding behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 2:

evading, unplanned slipshod behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	responsible systematic behavior
A	B	C	D	E

Scale 3:

dull, routine behavior	somewhat	neither	somewhat	enthusiastic, stimulating imaginative behavior
A	B	C	D	E

(Place the letter that you think appropriately describes instruction in the space provided)

Social Science:	Scale 1_____;	Scale 2_____;	Scale 3_____.
Biological Science:	Scale 1_____;	Scale 2_____;	Scale 3_____.
Physical Science:	Scale 1_____;	Scale 2_____;	Scale 3_____.
Humanities:	Scale 1_____;	Scale 2_____;	Scale 3_____.

12. What suggestions would you urge be examined for possible incorporation into the program and why would they be desirable? (e.g., students might be allowed to take a course for credit but receive grade of "pass" or "fail" if they so desired, or credit by examination or perhaps more extensive use of tutorials)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Questionnaire For Current Wright Students:

The questionnaire for current Wright students was sent to the student via an instructor with a request to the instructor that if the student was not available that the questionnaire would be returned to me. The student was asked to fill out the questionnaire and return it at his earliest convenience to a box provided for this purpose in the Admissions' office.

Dear Sir:

We are doing a follow-up study of students in our Dean's Scholars Program at Wright Campus of the Chicago City College. The Dean's Scholars Program is an accelerated curriculum largely in the Liberal Arts and Sciences for superior students and has been in operation at Wright for three years. Many Dean's Scholar participants have transferred to senior colleges and universities, and we are interested in appraisal of the program and solicit your cooperation in supplying the following information.

1. Does your institution accord a higher honor point weight computing GPA to courses designated "Dean's Scholar?"

2. What are the grade point averages by semester of the following students (Dean's Scholar students) our records show as transferring from Wright to your school?

	1st Sem.	2nd Sem.	3rd Sem.	Total GPA Earned	Major Field
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	____

Sincerely,